

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for cleansing wounds, comprising a conformable wound dressing, comprising a backing layer which is capable of forming a relatively fluid-tight seal over at least a portion of a wound and further comprising:

cleansing means for selectively removing materials that are deleterious to wound healing from wound exudate, the cleansing means ~~being configured to be~~ positioned between the wound and the backing layer; and

a moving device for moving wound exudate from the wound and to the cleansing means and for moving cleansed wound exudate from the cleansing means back to the wound.

2. (Previously Presented) An apparatus for cleansing wounds according to claim 1, wherein the cleansing means is a single-phase system in which fluid is moved through the cleansing means, wherein the fluid is at least one of wound exudate and irrigant, at least a portion of which fluid passes into, through and out of the cleansing means back to the wound bed.

3. (Previously Presented) An apparatus for cleansing wounds according to claim 1, wherein the cleansing means is a multiple-phase system comprising a chamber containing a cleansing fluid separated from the wound exudate by a permeable integer, and the cleansing fluid is moved through the cleansing means by the moving device.

4. (Previously Presented) An apparatus for cleansing wounds according to claim 1, wherein the apparatus is operated as a circulating system, in which fluid passes through the cleansing means one or more times in only one direction.

5. (Previously Presented) An apparatus for cleansing wounds according to claim 1, wherein the apparatus is operated as a reversing system such that fluid passes through the cleansing means at least once in each of two opposing directions.

6. (Previously Presented) An apparatus for cleansing wounds according to claim 3, wherein the cleansing fluid is the only fluid moved through the cleansing means.

7. (Previously Presented) An apparatus for cleansing wounds according to claim 3, wherein the cleansing fluid, and fluid comprising wound exudate are moved through the cleansing means.

8. (Previously Presented) An apparatus for cleansing wounds according to claim 3, wherein the permeable integer is selectively permeable to materials deleterious to wound healing in the wound exudate.

9. (Canceled)

10. (Original) A method of treating wounds to promote wound healing using the apparatus for cleansing wounds of claim 1.

11. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for cleansing wounds, comprising:

a wound cover configured to be positioned over at least a portion of a wound;

a cleanser ~~configured to be positioned between the wound and the wound cover,~~
wherein the cleanser adapted to selectively remove selectively removes materials that are deleterious to wound healing from fluid containing wound exudate;

an inlet for introducing fluid into the wound cover;

an outlet for removing fluid from within the wound cover;

a recirculation path comprising one or more conduits fluidly connecting the outlet to the inlet; and

a moving device for moving fluid containing wound exudate from the wound and to the cleanser and for moving cleansed fluid from the cleanser back to the wound through the recirculation path.

12. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 11, further comprises a bleeding device for bleeding wound exudate.

13. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein the bleeding device bleeds fluid to a canister.

14. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 11, wherein the cleanser comprises a chamber containing a cleansing fluid separated from the wound exudate by a permeable integer, and the cleansing fluid or the wound exudate is moved through the ~~cleanser~~by cleanser by the moving device.

15. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 14, wherein the permeable integer is selectively permeable to materials deleterious to wound healing in the wound exudate.

16. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 14, wherein the permeable integer is selectively permeable to materials beneficial to wound healing in the wound exudate.

17. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 14, wherein the moving device comprises a syringe.

18. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 14, wherein the moving device is portable.

19. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 14, wherein the moving device is integral with the wound dressing.

20. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 14, wherein the moving device is a pump.

21. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 14, wherein the apparatus is configured to supply an irrigant to the wound.

22. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 14, wherein the cleanser comprises an agent suitable for sequestering deleterious materials from the wound exudate.

23. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 14, wherein the ~~cleanser~~comprises a cleanser ~~comprises~~ comprises a macroscopic filter.

24. (Previously Presented) A method of treating a wound, comprising:

positioning a wound dressing over a wound, the wound dressing comprising a backing layer, so that the backing layer forms a seal around at least a portion of a wound;
removing fluid containing wound exudate from the wound;
cleansing the wound exudate beneath the wound dressing; and
returning the cleansed fluid to the wound.

25. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 24, further comprising bleeding fluid from the wound dressing with a bleed mechanism.

26. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 25, wherein the fluid is bled into a canister.

27. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 24, further comprising passing an irrigant fluid through the wound dressing into the wound.

28. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for cleansing wounds, comprising:

a conformable wound dressing comprising a backing layer capable of forming a seal over at least a portion of the wound;

a film configured to define a space beneath the backing layer and an upper surface of the film;

a filter configured to be positioned between the wound and the backing layer, the filter configured to retain wound exudate in the space between the film and the backing layer; and

an outlet tube for ~~removing fluid from the wound~~ communicating with a vacuum source and applying vacuum to the wound to draw wound exudate into the space between the film and the backing layer.

29. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 28, wherein the film is configured to be attached at least partially to the backing layer.

30. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 29 28, wherein the film is configured to contact at least part of the wound.

31. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 30 28, wherein the film is a flat sheet of polymeric material.

32. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 31 28, wherein the film is porous.

33. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 28, wherein the space between the backing layer and an upper surface of the film contains a filler.

34. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 33, wherein the filler comprises a foam.

35. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 28, wherein the filter comprises a polymeric membrane.

36. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 28, wherein the film is configured to contact at least a portion of the wound.

37. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 28, wherein the outlet tube is in fluid communication with a pump ~~vacuum source~~.

38. (Previously Presented) A method for cleansing wounds, comprising:

positioning a wound dressing over a wound, the wound dressing comprising a backing layer that forms a seal around at least a portion of the wound and a film beneath the backing layer defining a space between the backing layer and an upper surface of the film capable of containing wound exudate from the wound;

removing fluid from the wound using negative pressure; and
filtering at least a portion of said fluid to retain wound exudate in the space defined by the film beneath the backing layer.

39. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 38, further comprising recirculating unfiltered fluid back to the wound.

40. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 38, wherein the film is porous.

41. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 38, wherein filtering at least a portion of the fluid is performed using a porous polymeric membrane.

42. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 38, wherein the wound dressing comprises a filler.

43. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 42, wherein the filler comprises a foam.